

## **PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA**

**JUNE 28, 2007**

### **SPECIAL MEETING**

The Gulf County Board of County Commissioners met this date in special session with the following members present: Chairman Bill Williams, Vice Chairman Jerry Barnes, and Commissioners Carmen L. McLemore, Billy E. Traylor and Nathan Peters, Jr.

Others present were: County Attorney Timothy J. McFarland, Clerk Executive Administrator Towan Kopinsky, Clerk Becky Norris, Clerk Finance Officer Carla Hand, Chief Administrator Don Butler, Deputy Administrator Lynn Lanier, Building Official Lee Collinsworth, Building Inspector George Knight, Emergency Management Director Marshall Nelson, Emergency Management/911 Coordinator Ben Guthrie, G.I.S. Director Larry Davis, Grant Writer Loretta Costin, Gulf County E.M.S. Director Shane McGuffin, Maintenance Superintendent Steve Mork, Mosquito Control Director Mark Cothran, Planner David Richardson, Public Works Director Gerald Shearer, Assistant Public Works Director Jake Lewis, Road Department Superintendent Bobby Knee, Assistant Road Department Superintendent Chris Wood, Solid Waste Director Joe Danford, T.D.C. Director Paula Pickett, Union Steward Doug Kelly, and Veterans' Service Officer James Kennedy.

Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m., E.T.

### **2007-08 PROPOSED BUDGET**

Chairman Williams discussed that the Board needs to address the items that were tabled from the July 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, and Commissioner Peters discussed an incident in Wewahitchka today. Commissioner Traylor then reported on the incident that occurred regarding an emergency situation for the Road Department (a tree split and fell into the road), but the workers could not be contacted because their cell phones had been taken away. He stated that the Board was elected to see to the protection, safety and welfare of the people. Chief Administrator Butler discussed what the Board has considered thus far and inquired about how they want to proceed today. The Board requested that he review the summaries and committee recommendation first. Chief Administrator Butler then reviewed the previous items presented to the Board (Goals & Objectives, Core Services, Cost Reduction of Nine Percent Required in Ad Valorem Tax, Policy Changes Creating Budget Reductions/Savings, Budgets Requiring Increases, Recommendations for Budgeted Decreases, Outside Agencies Affected, Constitutional Officers' Budgets, Possible Revenue New/Amended Assessments, Possible Revenue Cost Shifts, and Possible Revenue). He then reported that the Board needs to reduce \$2,670,408.00 to balance the budget, and presented 8 possible scenarios prepared by the committee reflecting departmental reductions, 4-day work weeks and closure of the Wetappo Transfer Station. Upon inquiry, members of the Board stated that they do not agree with any of the scenarios (the lowest number of employee losses would be 24). After discussion, the Board agreed to go back through the summaries presented at the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **OUTSIDE ENTITIES**

The Board then received comments from the following outside entities regarding the proposed reductions.

#27152-49000      E.D.C.      (-\$50,000.00 / Balance -0-)

E.D.C. Director McNair discussed that the E.D.C. understands what the Board is facing and they realize their funding will have to be cut. Commissioner McLemore stated that he would like for the Board to approve the Super-Majority vote option to allow them to remain at the current rolled-back rate. Commissioner Traylor agreed, stating that a 9% reduction is going to cut too many services. Upon discussion regarding time limitations, Clerk Norris reported that her office must present a balanced budget to the Board by July 15<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner McLemore then motioned to cut all budgets by 9%, and the motion died for lack of a second.

#42562-81000      Health Department      (-\$124,573.00 / Balance -0-)

Health Department Administrator Kent appeared before the Board to discuss the proposed 100% reduction in funding for the Health Department, stating these funds are used as match funds and would cost them several jobs.

#27954-82000      Affordable Housing      (-\$10,000.00 / Balance -0-)

S.H.I.P. Program Coordinator Tremont appeared before the Board to discuss that they understand the Board's situation and the need for this reduction.

Commissioner Peters then motioned to reduce all Outside Agencies (that were tabled from the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting) by 50% of the recommended reduction, which will make the balances as follows. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion for discussion and, after discussion, the motion passed 4 to 1, with Commissioner McLemore voting no.

#27152-31000	<i>Chamber of Commerce</i>	<i>(-\$19,840.00 / Balance -0-)</i>
#27152-49000	E.D.C.	(-\$50,000.00 / Balance - \$25,000.00)
#42562-81000	Health Department	(-\$124,573.00 / Balance - \$62,287.00)
#43262-82000	Humane Society	(-\$7,425.00 / Balance - \$3,713.00)
#27954-82000	Affordable Housing	(-\$10,000.00 / Balance - \$5,000.00)
#51462-82000	Bay Cares	(-\$2,822.00 / Balance - \$1,411.00)
#51363-34900	<i>Bay Council on Aging</i>	<i>(-\$5,000.00 / Balance -0-)</i>
#51363-34500	Senior Citizens	(-\$59,400.00 / Balance - \$29,700.00)
#51363-34200	A.R.C.	(-\$10,501.00 / Balance - \$5,251.00)
#51363-34901	Gulf Transportation	(-\$27,720.00 / Balance - \$13,860.00)
#21174-83000	<i>Special Events</i>	<i>(-\$2,475.00 / Balance -0-)</i>
#51363-34100	<i>Guidance Clinic</i>	<i>(-\$6,863.00 / Balance -0-)</i>

## **CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS**

After discussion by Clerk Norris, Tax Collector Jenkins and Supervisor of Elections Griffin regarding how the budget cuts will affect their offices, Commissioner Peters motioned to reduce all Constitutional Officer budgets by 9% of the 2006-07 budget, making their tentative budgets as follows.

Clerk to Board	\$ 494,262.00
Property Appraiser	\$ 421,338.00
Tax Collector	\$ 443,268.00
Supervisor of Elections	\$ 264,361.00
Sheriff	\$ 2,386,518.00

## **COMMITTEE SCENARIOS**

Chief Administrator Butler discussed Scenario A-4 which would close the transfer station, go to a 9-hour/4-day work week, and cut a total of 24 employees (14 union/10 non-union). After discussion by Solid Waste Director Danford, Road Department Superintendent Knee and Union Steward Kelly regarding closing of the transfer station, members of the Board discussed implementing an M.S.B.U. for the entire county for landfills. Chief Administrator Butler stated that this would help for Year 2. Commissioner Peters then motioned to close the Wetappo Transfer Station, and Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 to 2, with Commissioners McLemore and Traylor voting no.

Chief Administrator Butler discussed the savings by implementing 9-hour/4-day work weeks for all hourly workers. Commissioner Traylor motioned to implement these 4-day work weeks, and Commissioner Peters seconded the motion. After discussion regarding how the remaining workforce would be affected, the motion failed 3 to 2, with Chairman Williams and Commissioners McLemore and Traylor voting no.

## **ROAD DEPARTMENT**

After discussion that this failed vote would put the Board on Scenario A-3, Road Department Superintendent Knee discussed that it would require the loss of over 6 employees in his department. Upon discussion by Union Steward Kelly that due to this being Union employees, it would require that the last 6 people hired be laid off, no matter which department they work in, and then there would have to be a shift between departments. After further discussion, Commissioner McLemore motioned to reduce the Road Department budget by cutting 2 positions. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

## **SHERIFF**

Sheriff Upchurch appeared before the Board to discuss the impact his budget reduction will create, stating that he will probably lose 8 employees. He also discussed the Wewa Substation and the contributions he receives from the Cities. After further discussion, Commissioner McLemore motioned not to close the Wewahitchka Substation, and Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 to 1, with Commissioner Peters voting no (stating he did not agree with purchasing the building in the beginning).

The meeting did then recess at 3:12 p.m., E.T.

The meeting reconvened at 3:24 p.m., E.T.

## **WEWAHITCHKA COURTHOUSE SPACE / RENT**

Sharon Gaskin and Gerald Thompson of North Florida Child Development appeared before the Board to discuss that they were in the same situation as the Board last fiscal year, and they thanked the Board for assisting them with free space in the Courthouse. They requested that the Board allow them to continue utilizing this space, stating that they now have the funds available to pay rent.

## **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

Upon inquiry, Solid Waste Director Danford discussed that Scenario A-3 would mean a loss of 8 employees in the Public Works Department. After further discussion by members of the staff and Board, Commissioner McLemore motioned to reduce the Public Works Department budget by cutting 9% of the 2006-07 budget, and by cutting 2 positions. Commissioner Peters seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

## **BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

Upon inquiry by Clerk Executive Administrator Kopinsky regarding the reductions for the County Departments, members of the Board discussed the recommendations of the committee. After further discussion, the Board approved the following reductions as presented by the committee:

#210--	Special Projects	-\$ 49,350.00
#21111-31100	BCC Professional Engineering Services	-\$ 61,500.00
#21111-31200	BCC Professional Litigation Services	-\$ 15,000.00
#21112	Administrator - Reduce 1 Employee, Travel & Cell Phones	-\$ 49,610.00
#21174-83000	Special Events	-\$ 2,475.00
#22313	Grants	-\$ 13,849.00
#22513	Risk Management	-\$ 21,772.00
#24523	Work Crews	-\$ 27,935.00
#24721	Safety	-\$ 15,509.00
#24852	Industrial Park	-\$ 6,682.00
#26019	Maintenance - Reduce 2 Employees	-\$ 65,778.00
#26119	Maintenance - Wewahitchka	-\$ 5,181.00
#26219	County Courthouse	-\$101,223.00
#26937-31000	Wetland Protection	-\$ 668.00
#27015	County Planning	-\$ 2,365.00
#27615	G.I.S. - Reduce 1 Employee	-\$ 91,732.00
#29153	Veterans' Service Office	-\$ 6,152.00
#31822	Wetappo Fire Department (G.F.)	-\$ 1,091.00
#H2722	Howard Creek Fire Department (G.F.)	-\$ 8,955.00
#33122-24000	Fire Departments (G.F. - w/c insurance transfer)	-\$ 32,000.00
#B3424	Building Department - Reduce 2 Employees	-\$ 85,000.00
#33022-34000	Physical Environment	-\$ 396.00
#34515	Planning	-\$ 18,592.00
#39126	Search & Rescue	-\$ 937.00
#39125	Emergency Management	-\$ 8,521.00
#39226	E.S.U. (Jaws-of-Life)	-\$ 2,330.00
#42262	Mosquito Control	-\$ 37,219.00
#42834	Public Works - Reduce 2 Employees	-\$246,278.00
#43062	Animal Control - Reduce 1 Employee	-\$ 35,000.00
#43334	Landfill Permitting	-\$ 51,876.00
#41041	Road Department - Reduce 2 Employees	-\$180,738.00
#51526	Wewa E.M.S.	-\$ 33,507.00
#51626	E.M.S. (P.S.J.)	-\$ 82,500.00
#52564	Commodity Program	-\$ 998.00
#57072	Park & Recreation Facilities	-\$238,651.00
#57172	Parks & Recreation	-\$312,994.00
#60023	General Court Administration	-\$ 922.00
#62271-34100	Library	-\$ 11,376.00

#63237	Extension Service	-\$ 10,205.00
#63421-49000	Sheriff's Auxiliary	-\$ 950.00
#99984-95000	Reserves	-\$101,756.00
#72033	Probation	-\$ 70,000.00

TOTAL REDUCTIONS    \$ 2,109,573.00

### **ADDITIONAL REVENUES**

Commissioner McLemore discussed the option of implementing additional gas taxes, stating that he feels the community would not be opposed to an additional 1cent per gallon. After discussion by Chief Administrator Butler regarding the 1-5 cent Second Local Option Gas Tax and the 1 cent Ninth Cent Local Option Gas Tax, Commissioner McLemore motioned to proceed with implementation of the 1-cent Ninth Cent Local Option Gas Tax, and Commissioner Peters seconded the motion. County Attorney McFarland then read the proposed Emergency Ordinance by title, and called for public comment. There being no public comment and after further discussion, the Board voted 4-1 (Chairman Williams voted no) to adopt the following emergency ordinance implementing the 1-cent Ninth Cent Local Option Gas Tax.

### **ORDINANCE NO. 2007-10**

#### **AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE OF GULF COUNTY, FLORIDA IMPOSING AN ADDITIONAL NINTH CENT LOCAL OPTION FUEL TAX, PROVIDING FOR TITLE AND CITATION, PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS OF PURPOSE, ESTABLISHING A LEVY OF THE TAX, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE, PROVIDING FOR A METHOD OF COLLECTION AND DISTRIBUTION, PROVIDING USES OF SUCH TAX, PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY**

**WHEREAS**, Gulf County, Florida is in a present emergency situation created due to the restructuring by the State of Florida of the current ad valorem property tax process; and

**WHEREAS**, Gulf County, Florida hereby declares and determines that an emergency exists with regard to implementation of a funding mechanism in order to avoid or minimize the loss of revenue required for core services which are essential to the public health, safety and welfare of Gulf County, Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, revenue from the additional ninth cent levy of the local option fuel tax will allow monies currently collected through ad valorem tax dollars to more appropriately be used for projects other than transportation expenditures for which such additional ninth cent levy is incurred;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** BY the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners as follows:

1. The levy and imposition of a tax of the additional "Ninth Cent Fuel Tax" upon every gallon of motor fuel and special fuel sold in Gulf County and taxed under the provisions of Chapter 206, Florida Statutes, for the purpose of paying the cost of transportation expenditures as described in section 336.025(7), Florida Statutes, shall hereby continue to be collected up to and including the year 2025. Upon expiration, any extension of the additional ninth cent fuel tax may be imposed as provided by law. The extension of the ninth cent fuel tax as provided herein shall be considered a reimposition of such tax from the date hereof

through and including December 31, 2025. A redetermination of the method of distribution has been made as provided in F.S. § 336.025 or as otherwise provided by law.

2. Gulf County shall have the option of shortening the time of collection of the "Ninth Cent Fuel Tax" by an amending ordinance.
3. This tax is imposed effective January 1, 2008 and up to and including the year 2025, terminating on December 31, 2025.
4. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are to the extent of such conflict hereby repealed.
5. If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase or portion of this ordinance is, for any reason, held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portion shall be deemed a separate, distinct and independent provision of such holding and shall not effect the validity of the remaining portion of this ordinance.
6. This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon its passage and adoption as provided by law.

**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** at the regular meeting of the County Commission on this 26<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2007.

(End of Ordinance)

Upon inquiry by County Attorney McFarland regarding the 1-5 cent Second Local Option Gas Tax (must be adopted today), the Board took no action on implementing this gas tax.

Upon inquiry by Commissioner Peters regarding implementation of a Communications Services Tax, County Attorney McFarland stated that the deadline for that process is September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **2007-08 BUDGET**

Upon inquiry, County Attorney McFarland reported that with a four-fifths (super majority) vote of the Board, the County could adopt the rolled-back rate budget, and with a unanimous vote, they could return to the 2006-07 rolled-back rate.

### **PARKS & RECREATION**

Members of the Board and staff discussed reduction of the Parks & Recreations budgets, stating that there are commitments that must be met in reference to interlocal agreements and grant requirements.

### **BUILDING DEPARTMENT / BUDGET FREEZE**

After discussion regarding the need for a new truck for the Building Department (funds are in the budget), Commissioner Peters motioned to allow the Building Department to advertise for sealed bids to purchase a pickup not to exceed \$19,000.00. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion for discussion and after discussion regarding the prices of trucks purchase through State Contract, the motion passed 3 to 2, with Chairman Williams and Commissioner McLemore voting no.

## **OVERSTREET FIRE DEPARTMENT / BUDGET FREEZE**

Overstreet Fire Chief Mize appeared before the Board to discuss completion of their building and re-building of their fire truck, stating that their funds have been frozen. Commissioner Traylor motioned to release funds for O.F.D. to finish their building. Commissioner Peters seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Commissioner Traylor discussed that necessity purchases must continue, it is the "extras" that have been frozen. After discussion by Chief Administrator Butler, Commissioner Peters motioned to allow purchases up to \$1,000.00. Commissioner Barnes seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Upon inquiry, Commissioner Peters motioned to release funds for O.F.D. to finish re-building their brush truck. Commissioner Traylor seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

## **GRANT FUNDS / BUDGET FREEZE**

Upon request by Solid Waste Danford, motion by Commissioner Traylor, second by Commissioner Peters, and unanimous vote, the Board agreed to release all grant funds from the budget freeze.

## **LANDFILL MONITORING**

Upon request by Solid Waste Danford, motion by Commissioner McLemore, second by Commissioner Peters, and unanimous vote, the Board agreed to release funds for well-monitoring and contamination studies from the budget freeze.

## **DUMP TRUCK ROTATION**

Road Department Superintendent Knee reported that the 9% budget cuts include discontinuation of the annual dump truck rotation for all departments.

## **OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

Members of the Board discussed cuts made to the Health Department and Senior Citizens, stating that Gulf County should never have been put in this position by the State.

## **REVENUES**

Planner Richardson presented a spreadsheet reflecting available revenues and how they have been implemented State-wide.

There being no further business, the meeting did then adjourn at 4:55 p.m., E.T.

**BILL WILLIAMS**  
**CHAIRMAN**

**ATTEST:**

**REBECCA L. NORRIS**  
**CLERK**